

Summary of “Parking Lot” Issues Workshop

October 12, 2005

1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Large Conference Room, Bonderson Building

901 P Street, Sacramento

Meeting Purpose:

• *Develop discussion items for the next California Water Plan Update Advisory Committee process.*

Parking Lot Topics for Next Water Plan Update

Policy Topics

1. More details on funding mechanisms
2. Describe how to implement beneficiary pays and user fees
3. Consider alternatives to economic theory for water allocation & distribution
4. Discuss privatization of public water systems
5. Consider resource management strategies used by Indigenous Peoples
6. Propose a statewide groundwater law
7. Consider State purchase of federal water facilities
8. Assess impact of water right decisions on communities
9. Discuss relationships with Western U.S. and Mexico
10. Track implementation of previous Updates
11. Consider the Water Plan’s social and political ramifications to communities – i.e., legislative actions, data, and decision-making affected by the Water Plan
12. Integrate water and energy policy recommendations
13. DWR needs a technical advisory group similar to the Advisory Committee to address technical needs of the Water Plan
14. Consider ways to merge watershed management efforts and plans & integrated regional water management efforts and plans

Technical Topics

15. Develop the Water Plan Information Exchange (Water PIE)
16. More “actual” years for water portfolio, especially a series of dry years
17. More local detail for Regional Reports & Water Portfolios
18. More groundwater information (quantity, quality & overdraft)

19. Change environmental water accounting and presentation
20. Improve the transparency of data. Show how data is used from water management plans (UWMP, GWMP, etc.)
21. More Scenarios and Response Packages based on more factors
22. Interrelationships / integration among Resource Management Strategies
23. Provide a comprehensive analytical framework to expand on Update 2005, Refine future supply and demand estimates
24. Include a “Gap” analysis; either past one or more comprehensive
25. Complete AB 2587 analysis – agricultural water demand for food security
26. More on climate change impacts and responses
27. More on energy cost impacts and water – energy relationships
28. Provide additional info on unmet environmental objectives, and more on instream flows (existing & environmental needs assessment)
29. More on flood risk
30. Present brackish water and seawater desalination as separate strategies
31. More discussion on water marketing & transfer impacts
32. Change the way Wild & Scenic Rivers are characterized

Key Themes:

- We cannot pursue all Parking Lot topics with equal weight.
 - What will be the theme of the next Water Plan Update?
 - What do we really want to accomplish first?
- One size does not fit all. The next Water Plan should utilize a regional approach when developing its policy, process, and technical components.
- The State should leverage the expertise and accomplishments that already exist in the regions.

Key Comments on the “Parking Lot”:

POLICY TOPICS:

- Add more details on a funding mechanism.
- Track outcomes.
- Be careful when staging the timing of documents; some have dependencies (example Urban Water Management Plans and CA Water Plan).
- Clean up Water Code legislation on the Water Plan to make it more relevant to what the state and water community really need.
- Look at broader relations with other states.

- Examine at the historical best practices of indigenous peoples in resource management in California.
- Look at related processes such as energy, or when large events that could change the landscape.
- Consider economic theory as well as non-market-based methods for water allocation and distribution. The current system is not consistent with market economic theory.
- Leverage talent and resources within the regions rather than relying solely upon a centralized state entity.
- Data should be collected and analyzed at resolutions that reflect policy concerns. Local-level impacts are important. Bring attention to the fact that some communities are still without access to clean drinking water.
- Consider a basic MOU language between regional consortiums and the State that would apply to all regions and set minimum requirements for outsourcing roles for the Water Plan.
- Add a new Parking Lot category called PROCESS.

Discussion of privatization of public water systems.

- Raise awareness that water rights in California are overappropriated and that there are tradeoffs between private rights and historic public trust rights for the public and environment.
- Show that the trend is to give greater certainty to private rights.
- Describe the private water utilities in CA so people know who they serve and a history of notable successes and problems.
- Have a comparative analysis of the municipal and private utilities, and show how municipal utilities have expanded.
- Develop a blanket approach to examine implications of “ownership” (including the role of SWP contractors, and include both public and private provision)

Discussion of statewide groundwater law idea:

- Improve groundwater data and information before beginning a discussion of new laws or policies.
- Statewide groundwater law topic should be reframed as an exploratory question, not as a recommendation. It must also be a neutral statement.
- Any combination of the word “statewide” together with “law” will cause alarm.

TECHNICAL TOPICS:

- Need more up-to-date information available at all planning levels: local, regional and state. California is a highly dynamic landscape, with significant implications from land use trends and climate change over time.
- Develop a mechanism for quality assurance as data is compiled and rolled up into higher levels.
- Use Urban Water Management Plans, to roll them up into regional analyses. Compare assumptions of UWMPs in different regions to ensure there is no double-counting.
- “Gap analysis” should be framed from a regional perspective.
- A “gap analysis” is important to identify unmet needs in environmental water accounting.

- Environmental water accounting needs to be addressed on both a policy and technical level, including restoration. Clearly define what restoration means.
- For flood management, there should be a full system approach that includes landscape management. Recognize that the term “flood” is a spectrum from the concept of risk to concept of opportunity. Excess water in the system can be captured and put to beneficial use.
- Do not neglect the conventional concept of flood risk. Emphasize that flood management involves more than levees.
- Water Plan Glossary needs to be done differently next time; should be worked on at the beginning of the process rather than at the end.
- Water Plan should identify discrepancies of development plans in individual counties on different parts of the same river.
- Break out desalination into 2 strategies – brackish and seawater. There is a lot of new research in the western states on brackish desalination that is not applicable to seawater.